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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND
JMC CARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBURGEOIS, DBENZE AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: UNSC Resolution on Lebanon,
Syria/Norway, Palestinian Territories, Iraq (8/11-13)

¶1. Summary: Syrian papers gave prominent coverage to the adoption of UNSC Resolution No. 1701, with detailed descriptions of its contents.

Papers also reported a press statement by Lebanese Foreign Minister Salloukh praising the UN Human Rights Council's resolution condemning the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Salloukh said that the resolution strongly condemned Israeli human rights violations, including deliberate targeting of civilians, and called for an investigation of Israeli massacres in Lebanon. The Minister said that the resolution is one of a series of complaints and cases that will be filed against Israel. Salloukh also discussed with the Assistant UN High Commissioner for Refugee Affairs the situation of the Lebanese people who have been displaced by the Israeli aggression and plans for their return to their homes. Salloukh also met with the US Ambassador in Beirut, and the Personal Representative of the UN Secretary General in Lebanon and discussed with them the enforcement of UN Resolution 1701 and the deteriorating situation in south Lebanon.

Papers also reported that talks between Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Miqdad and Svein Sevje, the Norwegian Envoy to the Middle East, focused on the latest developments in the region, the Israeli military aggression against Lebanon and the UN Security Council resolution. Talks also covered the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and Israeli violations of international law and UN resolutions.

End of summary.

¶2. Selected Headlines:

"A catastrophic day for Israeli Merkava tank. Over 100 Israeli soldiers killed or injured in confrontation with Lebanese national resistance. The national resistance downs an Israeli helicopter, killing its crew, and destroys 34 Merkava tanks" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/13)

"The Lebanese government approves UNSC 1701 resolution with reservations" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 8/13)

"Nasrallah, SecGen of Hizbollah, comments on the latest UN Security Council resolution on Lebanon: War is not over yet... When Israeli hostilities stop then Lebanese retaliations will end... The resistance confirms commitment to the April Understanding... Our reservations on the UNSC resolution will be discussed with the cabinet" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/13)

"Nasrallah: Issuance of the UNSC resolution fails to stop the aggression. The UNSC resolution is unfair and the resistance will go on fighting to defend our country. The Arab delegation to the UN: The Resolution is unbalanced and fails to consider Lebanon's interests. UN Chief Annan: Not adopting the resolution earlier undermined confidence in the international organization. Iran: the Resolution serves Israel. Russian President Putin: The Resolution gives a chance for political solution. Israeli Premier Olmert thanks US President Bush for his efforts on behalf of the resolution" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/13)

"Israeli Prime Minister Olmert takes the risk of dispatching his army to south Lebanon's graveyard. The Lebanese national resistance destroys an Israeli gunboat; the Israeli navy staggers" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/12)

"Treacherous Israel strike hits displaced Lebanese from Marjayoun at night" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/12)

"Mosque orators and Imams: The massacres in Lebanon confirm the enemy's racism and hatred of Arabs" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/13)

"Haaretz: Olmert has failed in managing the battle politically and militarily; He must resign" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/12)

"After providing Israel with smart bombs, the US administration provides Israel with cluster bombs" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/12)

"Deputy Foreign Minister Miqdad holds talks with the Norwegian envoy on the UNSC debate over the Israeli aggression" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/11)

"Israeli embarrassment and defeat in South Lebanon. Lebanese bloodshed continues under the rhythm of the UNSC debate. 18 Israeli soldiers killed and 38 wounded. 18 Mirkava tanks destroyed and 30 others withdrawn from the battlefield" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/11)

"Warnings against the deteriorating health of Dwaik, Speaker of Palestinian Legislative Council, in Israeli jail. Israeli occupation troops destroy a building in Gaza and wound 4 Palestinians who were demonstrating against the separation wall" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/12)

"Four US soldiers killed or wounded in clashes in Iraq while 135 Iraqis were victimized by a terrorist explosion in Najaf" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/11)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"Fascists"

Isam Dari, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, commented (8/12): "We were not surprised by US President George Bush's remark that he is at war with those whom he called 'Islamic fascists.' Wasn't he the one who said the United States was waging a crusade?"

"With all the politeness he is known for, Bush said that only some Muslims are fascists, not all of them, for he did not want to find himself compelled once again to apologize for another 'slip of the tongue.'"

"But aren't we, the political illiterates, entitled to ask: Who are the fascists? What is meant by the term 'Islamic fascists'? Is it connected to terrorism, for example?"

"If President Bush meant to liken the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Iraqi resistance, in particular, to the Italian fascism that

Mussolini's party represented or to the Hitler-led Nazi party, how does he describe Israel and its army, which for the entire past month has been killing women and children, destroying bridges, and targeting hospitals, ambulances, and everything that moves, including trees?

"Here we do not forget that Bush used the claimed British disruption of an attempt to blow up a passenger plane en route to the United States to reveal to us the truth about the racist fascism and to prove to us that the term 'crusade' that he once used was not a slip of the tongue, but a Zionist policy and ideology adopted by the neoconservatives, whose identification with the Talmudic creed has led them to a point where they preach the battle of Armageddon, in which the Jews will defeat evil. According to this Talmudic creed, evil is represented by the followers of all earthly and divine religions, mainly Islam and Christianity.

"Thus the neo-fascists disclose their full support for and blessing of the neo-nazis. And thus the facts on the ground prove that all these are the enemies of the people and the enemies of freedom and humanity. They are the ones who are waging the war of murder and destruction in Lebanon, and were doing the same before that in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The exporters of the weapons of destruction and genocide have no right to talk about fascism. And those who supported and blessed the killing of women and children and the destruction of everything in Lebanon, and who violated human rights in Abu Ghurayb, Guantanamo, and many other places, have no right to utter such reckless terms that harm Islam, the religion of love, brotherhood, and peace. The Islamic nation must respond, even if through the media, to the racist and arrogant ones. This is the least that can be done. Those words by Bush mark a new stage in the onslaught against the Islamic nation and the continuation of the destructive war against it. Is it not time for an

awakening?"

"Democracy of Destruction"

Samir al-Shibani, a commentator in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/12): "It has now become clear to the peoples and governments of the region that the democracy the US Administration has been talking about is meant only as a cover for its plan to infiltrate the region and redraw its map in a way that serves the interests of the United States and Israel....

"After all the Israeli destruction, horror, and massive use of internationally banned weapons in Lebanon and its assassination of democracy in Palestine, it has become clear to all Arabs that they have no option other than resistance. Here is the Israeli enemy continuing its aggression, understanding and recognizing nothing else. All Arabs, therefore, have to support the resistance and entrench the culture of resistance. Here is the American and Israeli 'democracy' entering its second month, carrying with it destruction, poison, and fascist conduct. What an evil democracy...."

"Ironical Contradictions"

Ahmad Hamadah, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/11): "Claims by the Israeli representative at the United Nations that Israel does not target civilians in Lebanon and that it is only fighting Hizbollah are ridiculous....

"These are bald lies, easily refuted.... If the massive destruction of Lebanese bridges, buildings, villages, cities, hospitals, and the entire infrastructure is not, as the Zionist representative claimed, a destruction of Lebanon, then what is

it...?

"Israel's claims that Hizbollah fighters operate amid civilians are false and baseless.... Images aired by the media prove that children, women, and the elderly are directly targeted by Israel.... Israel, which seeks to delude the world into thinking that it is fighting terrorism, is a terrorist entity that has been engaged in massive massacres since the first day of its establishment...."

"Deadly US Friendship"

Muhammad Ali Buzah, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/11): "Who can believe US statements that despite the tragic events in Lebanon the United States remains firmly and uncompromisingly committed to Lebanon and determined to bring the country out of its ordeal and help it live as a free and sovereign country? Who is the United States trying to fool?"

"If this mad and brutal Israeli killing and destruction in all Lebanese villages, cities, and regions with smart bombs and other prohibited weapons of destruction, and the use of the veto to obstruct the adoption of any international resolution against the Zionist entity and its crimes, and the attempts to save Israel and turn the defeat of the Biblical-American plan in Lebanon under the blows of the valiant resistance into a victory for the two allies, giving them gains they failed to achieve in the war -- if all this does not embody the blind racist hatred toward Lebanon and the [Arab] nation in general and does not

reflect a strong desire to see them vanish, then what is it called? Is it an expression of friendship and part of the alleged and promised support for this country?

"White House officials and their partners in Tel Aviv have been pursuing a policy of lies, hypocrisy, and deception and waging reckless and aggressive wars that have brought nothing but disasters and inflamed feelings of hatred and hostility toward the United States and its spoiled monster, Israel....

"The Lebanese and Arabs do not need this deadly American love.... Arabs must use their pressure cards to ward off the fateful danger and to defend honor and dignity.... Homelands are safeguarded not through friendships with and subservience to the United States, but by adopting the option of resistance."

"The Illusion of a New Middle East"

Ali Sawahah, a commentator in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/11): "Why is the new Middle East plan doomed to failure...?"

"First, the proponents of the new Middle East rely on the arrogance of power, which will not be acceptable to the peoples of the region, as the situations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lebanon have proven.... Second, the plan does not address the root-causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict.... Third, the United States lacks the most fundamental standards of integrity and neutrality.... Washington is not only biased toward Israel, but is also a partner in the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and Arabs....

"The resistance in Lebanon and Palestine cannot easily be crushed because it is not a passing phenomenon.... Hizbollah and HAMAS represent a new renaissance for the nation...."

Corbin